

## **WE HAVE SEEN HIS GLORY**

### **The Glory of Christ's Love**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

The last words of significant persons are often remembered and treasured. Farewell speeches are a prominent feature of the Bible: Jacob in Genesis 47-49, Moses in Deuteronomy, Joshua in Joshua 22-24, David in 1 Chronicles 28-29 and of course Paul in Acts 20 and 2 Timothy. In our pursuit to hear about Jesus through the Gospel of John, the author now invites us to come into the inner sanctuary and hear Jesus' farewell words to His Disciples – the Eleven! The next 3 chapters express these farewell words. It all starts with an announcement by the Savior and then He gives three statements of comfort. An outline would look like this:

#### **Announcement:**

**The Son of Man has been glorified; the time of departure has come  
(13:31–33)**

**Comfort #1:** I return to the Father to prepare a place (14:1–4)

**Comfort #2:** Rejoice because I am returning to the Father (14:27–28)

**Comfort #3:** I leave so that the *paraklētos* can come (16:4b–7)

#### **Text**

This morning we are going to examine Jesus' announcement of His glorification and departure. The text is found in [John 13:31–35](#) (ESV),

*<sup>31</sup> When he had gone out, Jesus said, "Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in him. <sup>32</sup> If God is glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself, and glorify him at once. <sup>33</sup> Little children, yet a little while I am with you. You will seek me, and just as I said to the Jews, so now I also say to you, 'Where I am going you cannot come.' <sup>34</sup> A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. <sup>35</sup> By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.'"*

#### **Exposition**

Two themes emerge from Christ's 'Announcement', themes that are special to His heart: "His glory" and "His love".

#### **The Glory of the Son of Man and the Delight of the Redeemed**

From the resurrection of Lazarus forward the theme of glory becomes increasingly clear. In chapter 12 Jesus announces, "And Jesus answered them, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified." (John 12:23, ESV). Now we read these verses: "When he had gone out, Jesus said, "Now is the Son of

*Man glorified, and God is glorified in him. If God is glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself, and glorify him at once.*" (John 13:31–32, ESV).

"When he had gone out" refers to Judas. Previously we read, "So, after receiving the morsel of bread, he immediately went out. And it was night." (John 13:30, ESV). It was night. The darkness speaks of the foreboding evil that will take place. G. Campbell Morgan writes, "Evil will deliver up Christ, but infinite love and compassion of God will overrule that betrayal, so that it becomes the very means by which redemption is provided for a race."<sup>1</sup>

We now witness the reality of these ancient words lived out in Jesus' life: "As for [Satan], you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today." (Genesis 50:20, ESV). Now the Son of Man will be glorified. Don't miss this favorite name for Himself that Jesus uses. Since the beginning of time the world has been looking for a Man-Savior ("I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel." (Genesis 3:15, ESV).

Will it be Able? Seth? Noah? Abraham? David? No! The promise Seed, the Son of Man will now be revealed in all His glory. This revelation will not come through military might or political proficiency, but through the Cross. This was the one who was the promised son who would reign and rule in righteousness in the Davidic line. This was the Messiah. This was the Man that would be exalted as Daniel saw that would be given dominion and power overall. Jesus says, "Now is the Son of Man going to be glorified."

It would happen "at once". Jesus will be dead in less that 15 hours. No more waiting. No more past tense. It is happening now. "Now the departure of Judas puts the actual machinery of arrest, trial and execution into motion."<sup>2</sup> The moment that the entire Old Testament canon anticipated is here: the revelation, the glorification of the Messiah. All history up to this time has been heading to this point. Notice the unique description of this Father/Son glorification:

- Now is the Son of Man glorified
- God is glorified in him
- God will also glorify him in himself

The Cross would become the supreme glory of God because the Son would completely obey the will of the Father. His resurrection would become the means to vindicate His righteous act in justifying sinners. And the ascension will restore Him to the glory he enjoyed with the Father in his preincarnate state. Every event since the Fall of man has been on this trajectory. Now the moment has arrived. The Father and the Son mutually glorified in one another.

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<sup>1</sup> Morgan, G. Campbell, *Studies in the Four Gospels*, Flemming H. Revell Co., N.J. USA, 1931, Page 238

<sup>2</sup> Carson, D. A. (1991). [\*The Gospel according to John\*](#) (p. 482). Leicester, England; Grand Rapids, MI: Inter-Varsity Press; W.B. Eerdmans.

The Savior hand-picked these men. He lived with them for about three years. They walked with him throughout Galilee and Judea and even into Samaria. What are they to do in His absence? Christ gives the answer.

## Love – The Fatherly Expectation of His Children

We have already noted that John's analysis of the life and ministry of Christ is profoundly this: "having loved his own who were in the world."<sup>3</sup> Having announced His impending glory Jesus now lays out His expectations for His disciples, in His absence. "Jesus commands his disciples to love one another (13:34a).

Jesus will develop this further in this discourse in John 14:15-24, 15:12. But notice the change of tone. "My children" (*teknia*), he addresses them. There is now Fatherly tenderness as he speaks to them. "My children." He is certainly their Creator. He is their Judge. He is their God. He is their Prophet. He is their Savior. But now He addresses them as their Father. With the heart of a Father, Jesus gives a new command.

The *new* command is not 'new' because nothing like it had ever been said before (Deuteronomy 6:5; Leviticus 19:18; Mark 12:28-33). Clearly the "newness" of this command is seen in its standard, "love one another: just as I have loved you."<sup>4</sup> This is different than "love others as you love yourself." But the newness of command is also a family command from a Daddy. Can you not see a Daddy sitting down with his children before his departure and saying, "Children, love each other as I have loved you?"

This kind of command is acknowledging the existence of a family, a community – a Messianic community, a Church – the Body of Christ, the new nation – the New Israel. In view of His departure, the activity of His disciples is to each model Christ's love one another. Up to this point they have not been taught on the Holy Spirit. Jesus is simply saying to each of them: "Be me to one another in love." This will be explained more later in Christ's conversation, but Jesus gives them a reason for this command. And this becomes a key identifier to a watching world. "*By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.*"<sup>5</sup> (John 13:35, ESV)

## Application

Kenneth Gangel writes,

"In the 1960s when Christian folk music was becoming popular, we often sang a song that repeated the phrase, "and they'll know we are Christians by our love." Not by the size of our buildings. Not by the frequency of our attendance. Not by the multiplicity of religious duties we observe. Not by the ostentation [showiness] of our public worship."<sup>5</sup> Likewise, G. Campbell Morgan wrote, "The measure in

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<sup>3</sup> [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Jn 13:1). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

<sup>4</sup> [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Jn 13:34). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

<sup>5</sup> Gangel, Kenneth. Holman New Testament Commentary - John: 4 (p. 255). B&H Publishing Group. Kindle Edition.

which Christian people fail in love to each other is the measure in which the world does not believe in them, or their Christianity. It is the final test of discipleship, according to Jesus.”<sup>6</sup>

This is astonishingly convicting. Our attitude to one another within the Body of Christ is the foundational proof that our message of the Gospel is plausible and believable. Perhaps it's easier to go through the community and hand out Gospel tracts. Perhaps it's easier to debate with neighbors Creation or the existence of God. Perhaps it's easier to be trained in apologetics and conduct brilliant debates with scientists and philosophers. Perhaps all that is easier than simply loving one another as Christ loved us. I know it is for me!

Let's be real. It's difficult to love one another as Christ loved us even with people we love! Just look at your spouse!

It's difficult to love one another because all of us can be the most unlovely people at times. But Jesus didn't love us because we were lovely. He loved us freely, by grace.

It's difficult to love one another as Christ loved us because often, we don't feel like it. But Jesus didn't command us to feel love to one another, did He?

It's also difficult to love one another as Christ does because we have a very impoverished view of love. Most of us understand the tolerant, permissive, inclusive side of love but rarely consider the truth-telling, admonishing, warning side of love, for example.

It's also difficult to love one another as Christ loved us, because there are many times in any given day when we love ourselves more than anyone else.

But I would suggest that the most important reason we find it hard to love one another as Christ loved us is because we can't. That's right, we can't. In Chapter 15 of this Gospel, Jesus is going to teach us that the spiritual fruit that identifies us as disciples is love for one another. And guess what He says at the beginning of that chapter: *“I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.”* (John 15:5, ESV)

Loving one another as Christ loved us is something we can only do “in Jesus”; it is something we can only do by drawing nourishment from Jesus; by remaining in Him. And the promise that Jesus gives in this Chapter, in this context is this: “so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you.”<sup>7</sup>

Why might Christ make it so difficult and yet so important to love one another? Is it not so that His glory can be revealed? And it is His glory that unbelievers see that can open their eyes to the Savior! As I conclude turn with me and hear the words of Peter in 1 Peter 4:7–11 (ESV),

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<sup>6</sup> Morgan, G. Campbell, *Studies in the Four Gospels*, Fleming H. Revell Co., N.J. USA, 1931, Page 241

<sup>7</sup> [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Jn 15:16). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

*“<sup>7</sup> The end of all things is at hand; therefore be self-controlled and sober-minded for the sake of your prayers. <sup>8</sup> Above all, keep loving one another earnestly, since love covers a multitude of sins. <sup>9</sup> Show hospitality to one another without grumbling. <sup>10</sup> As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God’s varied grace: <sup>11</sup> whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies—in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ.*